

MONKMAN PROVINCIAL PARK
MASTER PLAN BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

DRAFT



Ministry of Environment
Lands and Parks
Northern B.C. Region

March 1992

BC

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MARCH 1992

Prepared by

BC PARKS

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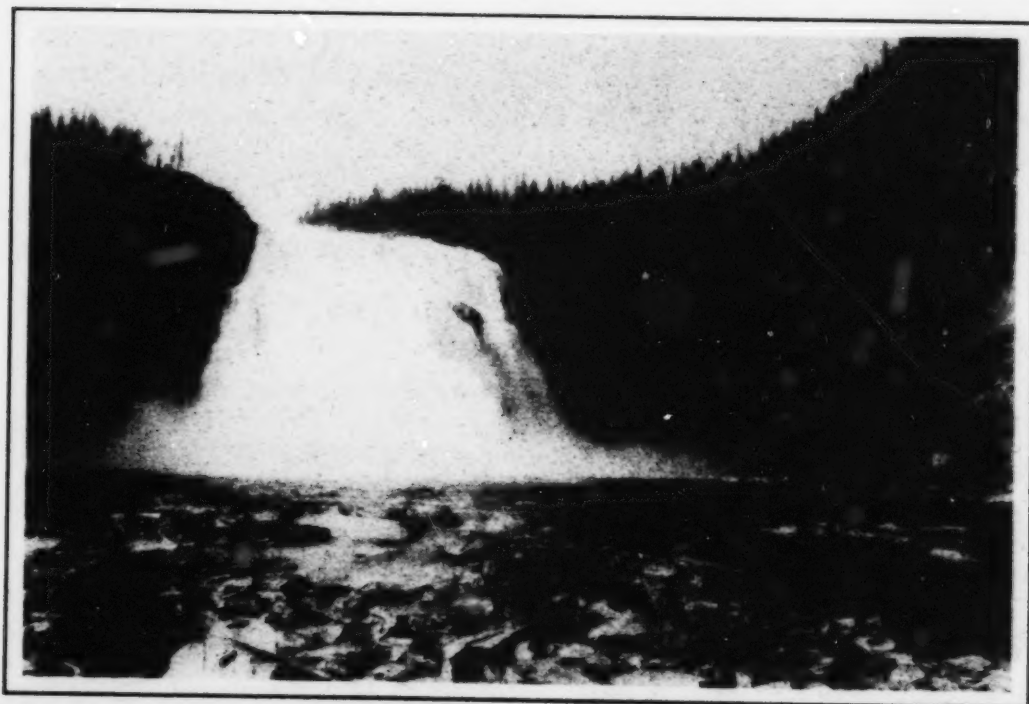
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Monkman Lake, Monkman Provincial Park



Kinuseo Falls, Monkman Provincial Park

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MONKMAN PROVINCIAL PARK

FIGURE 1

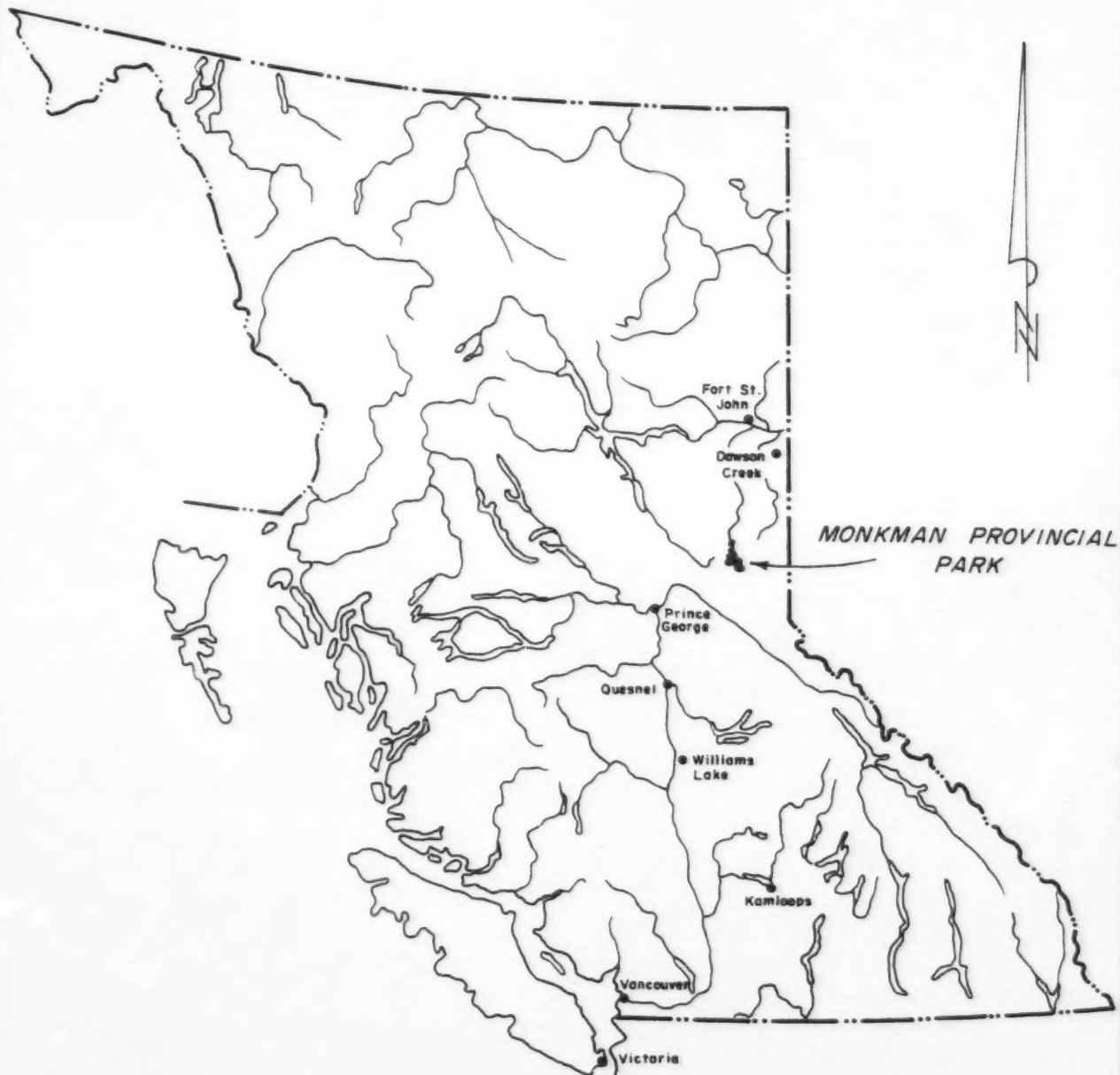
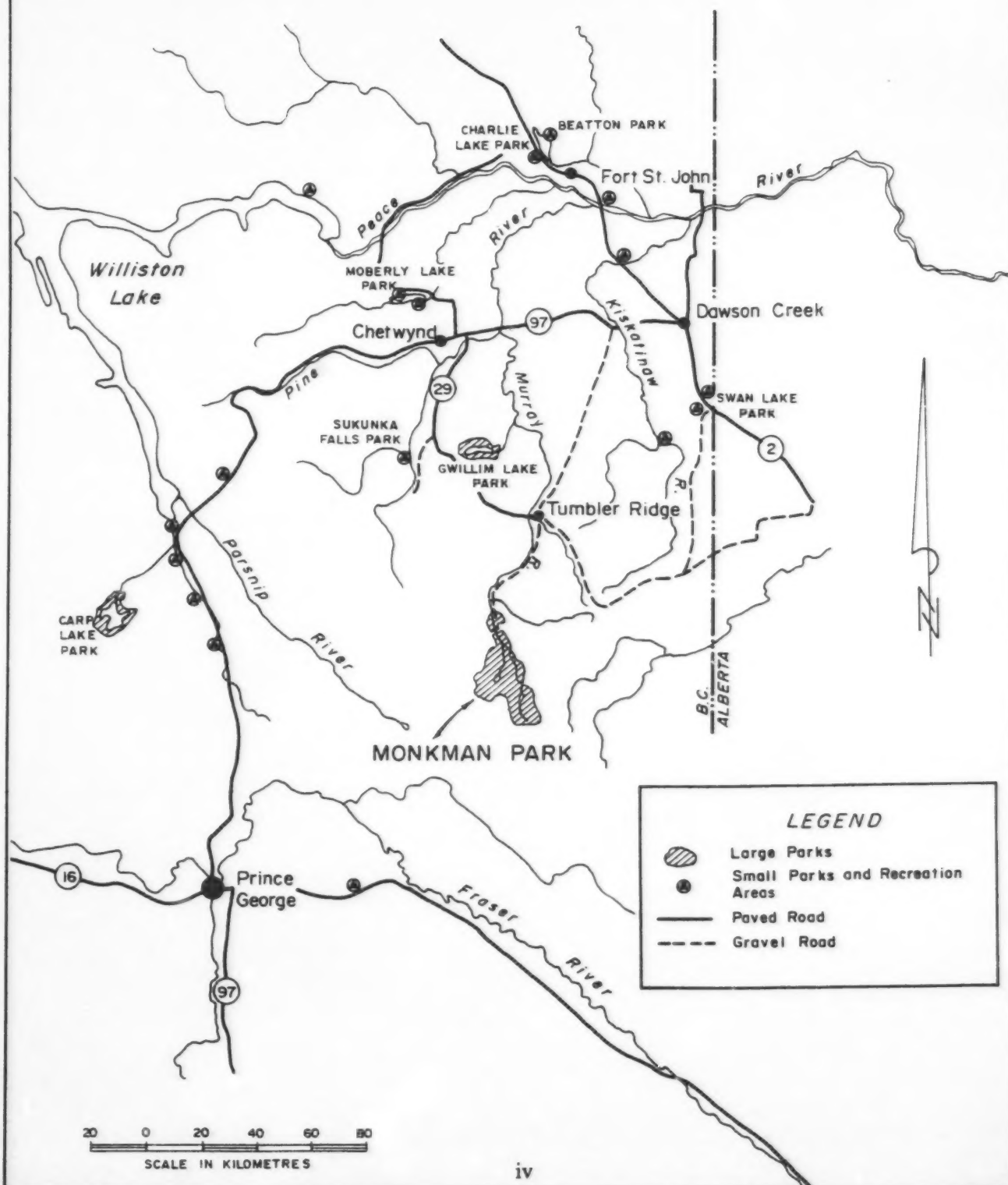


FIGURE 2

MONKMAN PROVINCIAL PARK



INTRODUCTION

This report contains background information on the natural, cultural and visual resources of Monkman Provincial Park; the park's recreational resources and opportunities; and management considerations which will be addressed in the current master planning process.

Monkman Provincial Park

Monkman Provincial Park is a magnificent alpine area lying on the eastern edge of the northern Rocky Mountains, approximately 42 km south of Tumbler Ridge, B.C. (figures 1 and 2). The park covers an area of approximately 32,000 hectares. Its natural features range from majestic mountains with extensive alpine meadows, to tranquil alpine lakes and the thundering Kinuseo Falls. The old 'Monkman Pass Highway' route runs through the heart of the park. The pass and the park are both named after local pioneer Alex Monkman, who explored the area in 1921. Monkman Park borders the arctic side of the Continental Divide, its waters running north to the arctic and south to the pacific.

The present boundaries of this "Class A" provincial wilderness park were established on July 30, 1981 (figure 3). A road south from Tumbler Ridge joins the park with the Heritage Highway that connects Tumbler Ridge with Chetwynd and Dawson Creek.

Provincial and Regional Significance

Monkman Provincial Park plays an important

role in helping BC Parks fulfill its mandate of conserving and managing outstanding features and landscapes of the province while also providing opportunities for diverse, high quality and safe outdoor recreation opportunities.

Monkman Park is one of the larger parks in northeast British Columbia. It was established in the early 1980s, along with Gwillim Lake Provincial Park, as part of the Northeast Coal Project. The newly constructed road access and the campground development near Kinuseo Falls will draw tourists and regional residents to the area, stimulating diversification of the area's economic base.

Conservation Role

Monkman Provincial Park provides BC Parks with representation of the Central Rocky Mountains and Foothills regional landscape – and its associated wildlife, plants and ecosystems. This landscape is characterized by a sub-boreal area of relatively modest mountains and hills, arranged in distinct ridges, and separated by broad U-shaped valleys. The

park's special features include its alpine lakes and scenic value, Monkman Pass for its historic value, and Kinuseo Falls – an outstanding visual and recreation feature of provincial significance. Monkman Park also contains high quality grizzly bear habitat, and will serve an important conservation role for protecting this habitat within the Central Rocky Mountains landscape type.

Recreation Role

The natural landscape of Monkman Park lends itself to various forms of outdoor recreation and nature appreciation. Park visitors can enjoy recreational opportunities ranging from backcountry hiking, mountain climbing, camping, hunting and fishing, to day hikes, nature study and scenery appreciation. Accessible areas for these types of recreational pursuits are limited in the northern Rockies, increasing the value of Monkman Park as a regional tourism and recreation destination.

Monkman Park Planning Areas

For planning and descriptive purposes, the park has been divided into three areas: Kinuseo Falls; Monkman Creek; and Lower Blue - Upper Blue Lakes (figure 3). Two additional areas outside of the present park boundary, Limestone Lakes and Monkman Tarns, are areas of interest for possible park expansion.

Kinuseo Falls Area

Kinuseo Falls is the outstanding feature of this area. Here, the Murray River plunges 60 meters to the channel below. A 42 site campground, day-use area, service yard, and two viewing platforms are located near the falls, next to the Murray River. This area is presently the most easily accessible portion of the park, and receives the highest visitor use.

Monkman Creek - Monkman Lake Area

This area comprises the main body of the park. Monkman Lake, the largest lake in the park, is located here. The Monkman Trail winds through a portion of the park, providing backpackers and hikers with a route to explore the splendour of the area. The trail begins at the campground parking lot and ends at Monkman Lake.

Upper and Lower Blue Lakes Area

This area features four scenic lakes: Paxton, Lupin, Upper Blue and Lower Blue. These lakes are the headwaters for the Murray River, which flows north into the Peace River.

Limestone Lakes Area (interest area for a park addition)

The Limestone Lakes area, featuring three beautiful alpine lakes nestled in a scenic steep-walled valley, lies to the south of the park. This area is of interest to BC Parks as an addition to Monkman Provincial Park

because of its important mountain goat habitat, dramatic geological features (the steep-walled valley and outflow inversion), hiking opportunities and scenery.

Monkman Tarns Area (interest area for a park addition)

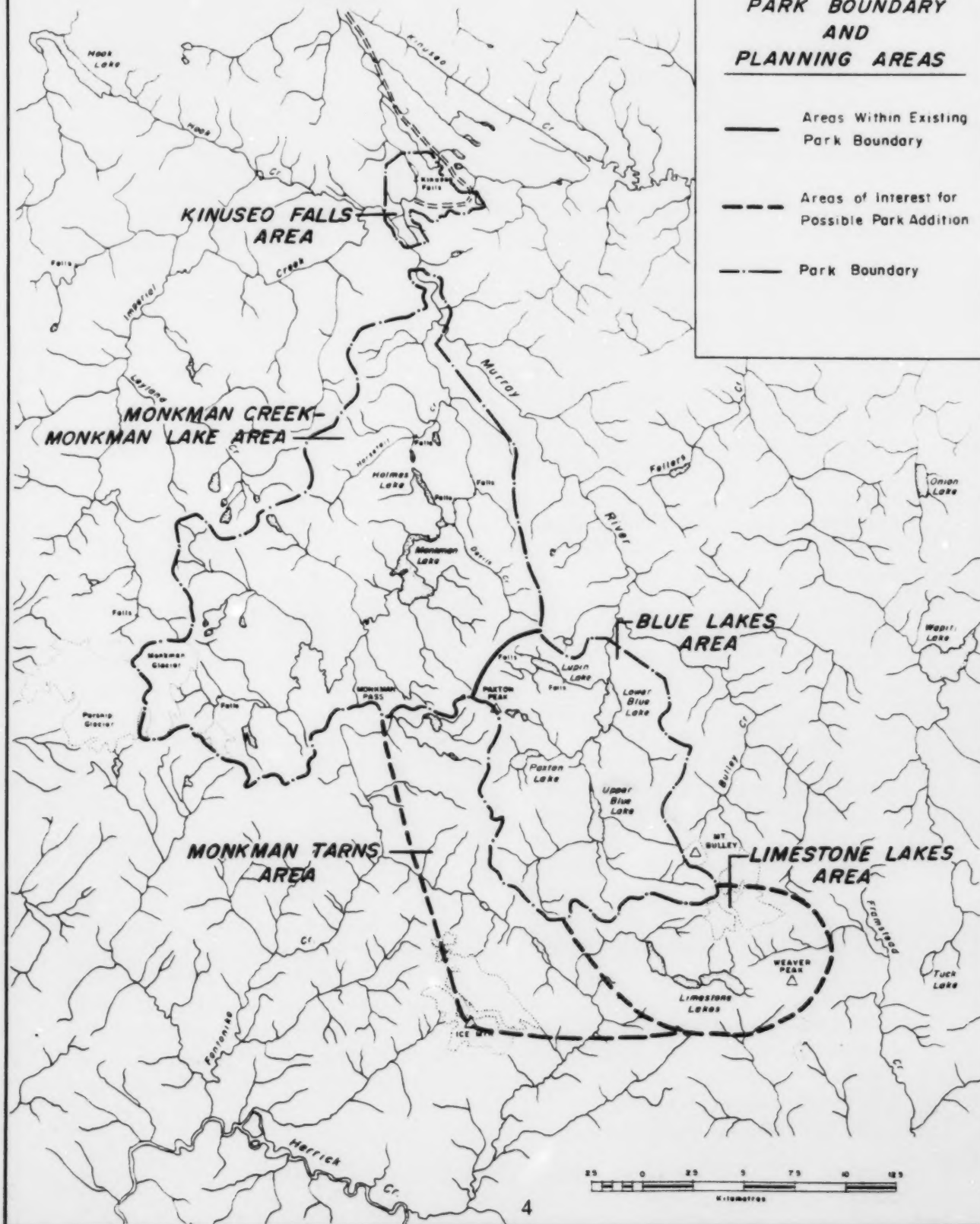
The Monkman Tarns area also lies to the south of the present boundary of Monkman Park, and is being considered by BC Parks as a possible addition to the park. This area is on the Pacific side of the Continental Divide, and is characterized by gently rolling, mid-elevation subalpine meadows and subalpine lakes, and provides excellent opportunities for extended hiking and backpacking.

MONKMAN PROVINCIAL PARK

FIGURE 3

PARK BOUNDARY AND PLANNING AREAS

- Areas Within Existing Park Boundary
- - - Areas of Interest for Possible Park Addition
- Park Boundary



NATURAL FEATURES AND RESOURCES

Climate

The climate of Monkman Provincial Park is influenced by the Rocky Mountains. The weather in the park tends to be cool, wet and often windy. During the summer season, moisture-laden air from the Pacific Ocean is held on the western flanks of the continental divide, allowing warm dry air to circulate over the east side of the ranges. During the winter months, on the other hand, cold arctic air flowing south is blocked by the mountains, creating more severe conditions on the east side of the divide than the west. In both summer and winter, therefore, weather conditions in the park tend to be unstable.

The Kinuseo Falls area has the mildest climate in the park; the frost-free period here is about 5 months. July maximum temperatures average 19°C while January minimums average -18°C. Total precipitation for the year is approximately 86 cm, of which 50-75% generally falls as snow.

Landforms

A 1982 study of National Areas of Canadian Significance (NACS) by the Canadian Parks Service found that Monkman Pass has the greatest diversity of abiotic (non-living) features found in the Hart Ranges, particularly glacial lakes, waterfalls and icefields.

The Hart Ranges form a belt of lower elevation mountains within the central Canadian Rockies (figure 4), and are the backbone of Monkman Park. The park lies within a sub-range of the Harts – the Solitude Range – where elevations generally do not exceed 2500 meters. These mountains are oriented in a southeast-northwest direction and are composed of thrust faults with southwesterly facing aspects. Tectonic forces have folded and faulted these bedrock planes into an intricate landscape pattern. The otherwise gentle gradient of the Monkman Creek valley, for example, is broken by sharp fault lines which intersect the channel bed, creating impressive cliffs and waterfalls as the waters of the creek flow northward.

In other areas of the park, exposed bedrock dips and faults create cliffs, rock abutments and subterranean drainage features. At Kinuseo Falls, the severely folded pattern of the underlying strata forming the scarp can be observed as a large "S" on the west wall of the Murray River channel.

On Mount Watts an outcrop of sedimentary bedrock has revealed fossil remains of prehistoric aquatic life, evidence of what was once an ancient inland sea which covered western Canada long before the uplifting of the Rocky Mountains.

From the headwaters of Monkman Creek and the Murray River, the mountain peaks of the Continental Divide rise up to form the backbone of the Rockies.

Much of the landscape of Monkman Park was shaped by a continental icecap, which covered the region to an elevation of 2000 meters as recently as 10,000 years ago. During more recent geological history, alpine and valley glaciation has further transformed the terrain. There are many examples of glacial and glaciofluvial landforms in the park, including cirques, tarns, moraines, streams and ablatial till.

Monkman Park is representative of the Central Rocky Mountains and Foothills regional landscape. This segment of the Rocky Mountains and Foothills has the least pronounced relief and ruggedness, and is a sub-boreal area of relatively modest mountains and hills, arranged in distinct ridges, separated by broad, U-shaped valleys.

Geology

The foothills which border the northeast corner of the park rest on a bed of sedimentary rock from the Mesozoic Era. Much younger than the Rocky Mountains, the foothills were subject to relatively little uplifting and dissection, resulting in a less rugged landscape.

Beneath the Rocky Mountains lie sedimentary and metamorphic rocks formed between the

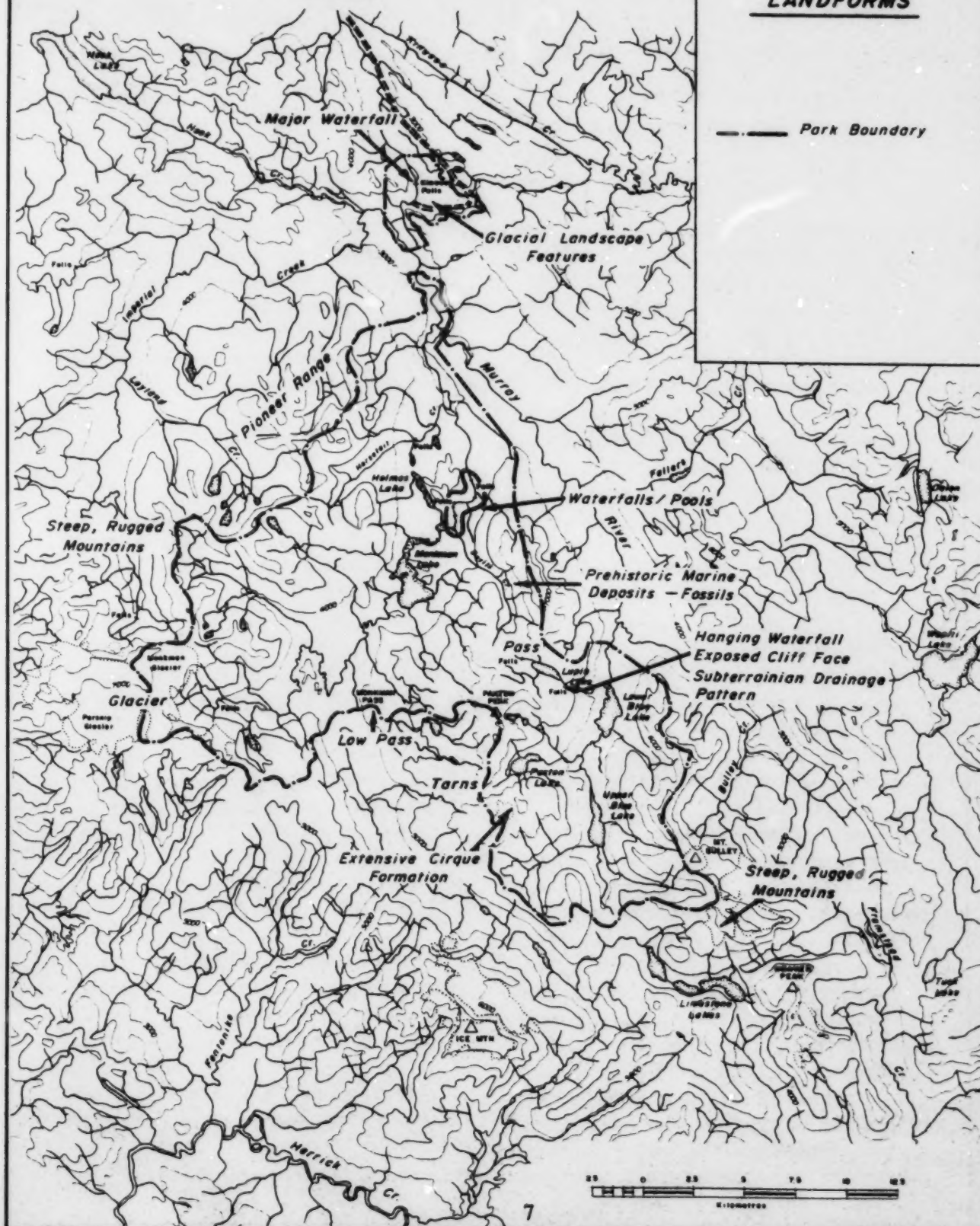
Precambrian and Palaeozoic eras. The thick quartzite and limestone formations that are characteristic of the Park Ranges to the south of Monkman Park give way to the schistose formations of the Hart Ranges and the park. These schistose formations are incapable of supporting the castle-like forms and steep slopes that are typical of limestone and quartzite rocks, resulting in a mountain range that is less rugged than the southern Rocky Mountains. The Hart Ranges are composed of sedimentary limestone, dolomite, quartzite, schist, sandstone and shale formations.

Soils

In the valley bottoms of the park where slopes are quite gentle and fluvial effects more extensive, soils are deep, highly developed, and often poorly drained. The upper Monkman valley (south of Monkman Lake) contains a series of large marshes with mucky, organic soils and standing water. In the lower valley where slopes are well-drained, in contrast, podzolic soils promote the formation of the forest cover which is prominent in much of the park. The source of these soils is the colluvial and morainal parent material which resulted from glacial activity.

Other soils in the park are generally classified according to gradient and elevation. Their depth and productivity decreases with steeper slopes and higher elevations. Podzols and brunisols give way to rock outcrops and talus accumulations on the severe upper slopes of the mountains.

LANDFORMS

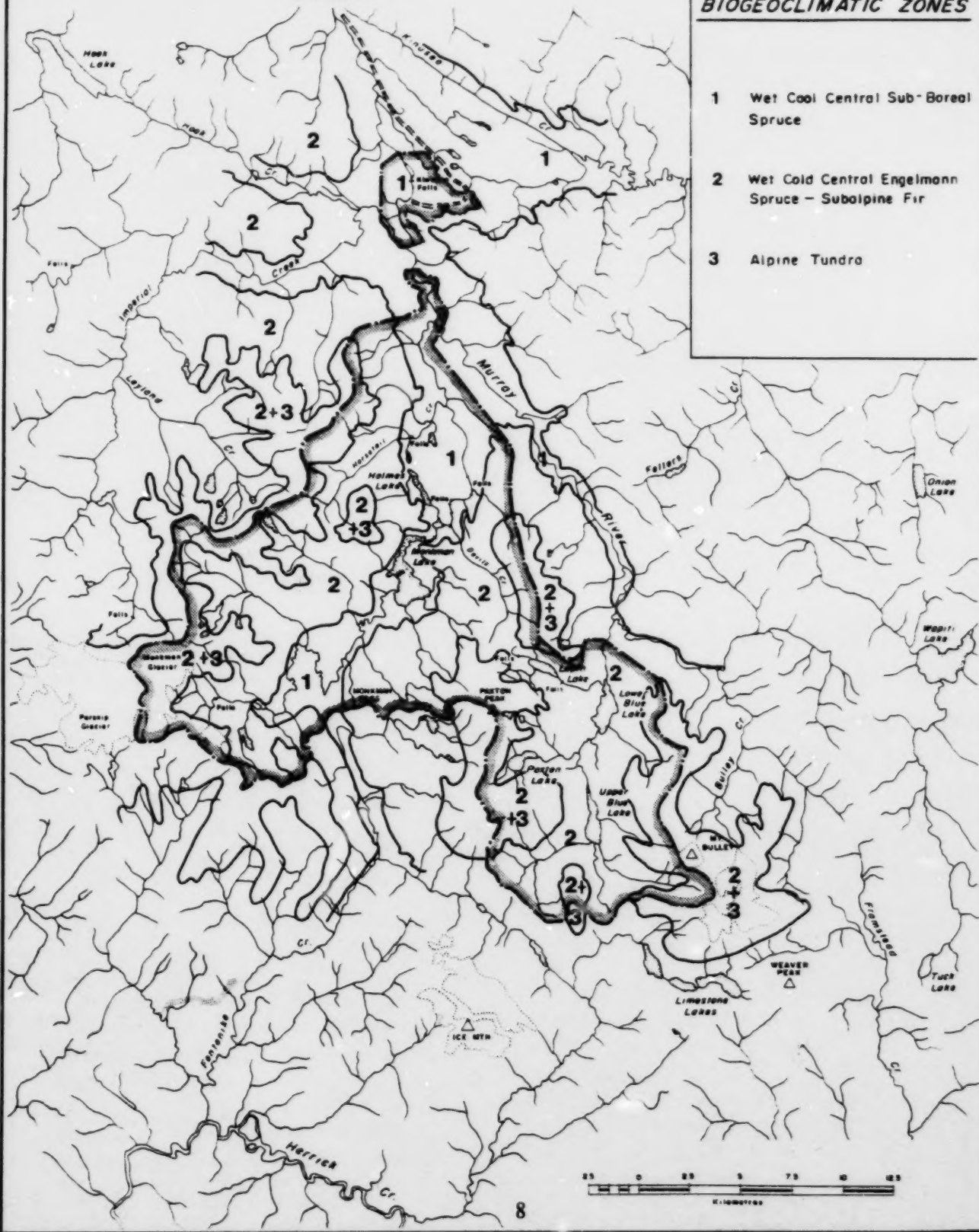


MONKMAN PROVINCIAL PARK

FIGURE 5

BIOGEOCLIMATIC ZONES

- 1 Wet Cool Central Sub-Boreal Spruce
- 2 Wet Cold Central Engelmann Spruce - Subalpine Fir
- 3 Alpine Tundra



Vegetation and Biogeoclimatic Zones

Monkman Provincial Park contains examples of three of B.C.'s fourteen Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification zones: the Sub-boreal Spruce, Englemann Spruce - Subalpine Fir, and Alpine Tundra zones (figure 5). Biogeoclimatic zones are areas of similar vegetation, soil, topographic and climatic types.

Sub-Boreal Spruce (SBS) zone

This forest occurs at lower elevations of the park – below 1100 meters. Climate in this band is wet and cool, with a mean annual precipitation of 824 mm and a mean annual temperature of 0.7 degrees Celsius. The wetter climate of this area reflects the valley bottom locations. The mature forests have canopies of subalpine fir and hybrid white spruce, with lodgepole pine. This zone provides summer habitat for moose, mule deer, black and grizzly bears, and early fall habitat for caribou.

Engelmann Spruce/Subalpine Fir (ESSF) Zone subzone: ESSFmv2 (ESSFn) – Moist Very Cold ESSF

This subzone occurs above the SBS zone, generally between 1000 - 1400 meters. The climate in this subzone is wet with high snow accumulations of 3 meters or more.

The climax forests here are dominated by Englemann spruce and subalpine fir. Just a

few stands of lodgepole pine exist in this zone because of the lack of fire history. Sitka alder stands 200 years old or more are common in moist, low-lying sites, especially on north-facing slopes.

Forests of this type support moose, grizzly bears, wolverines, fishers, martens, gray wolves, red squirrels, and numerous bird species including spruce grouse, blue grouse, great gray owls, great horned owls, barred owls and hawk owls.

Engelmann Spruce/Subalpine Fir (ESSF) Zone subzone ESSFwk2 (ESSFh3) – Wet Cool ESSF

This subzone is similar to the one described above, but occurs above 1300 meters and has a wetter and cooler climate due to its higher elevation. The forest here tends to grow in widely-spaced clumps, and is always dominated by subalpine fir and white spruce.

Avalanche tracks are important for grizzly bears in the spring, and are also used by blue grouse, willow ptarmigan and white-tailed ptarmigan in the spring. Moist subalpine sites are used in summer by caribou, moose, wolverines, gray wolves and willow ptarmigan. Mountain goats use the rugged bedrock outcrops on warmer south-facing slopes, near stands of subalpine fir and Englemann spruce. Although little information is available on caribou use of the park during winter, subalpine fir stands with abundant arboreal lichen may provide potential winter habitat.

Alpine Tundra zone

Above the tree line in the alpine tundra zone, plants adapted to the harsh conditions are found. At this elevation the climate is severe enough to prevent most trees from growing. Dwarf spruce and fir trees, called Krummholz, cover large areas, interspersed with meadows of heather, grass and colorful wildflowers. It is a dry, windswept environment, where the soil is continually disrupted by the effects of frost action, snow cover and active run-off. Only barren rocky ridges and the steep mountain peaks are above the alpine tundra.

Wildlife

During the summer, large mammals are often seen throughout the park. The diverse range of habitat in Monkman Park supports grizzly and black bear, mountain goats, caribou and moose, and may also support elk and sheep. During the winter months, however, the harsh climate, deep snow and insufficient winter range displace most large animals from the area.

There have been few surveys of wildlife populations or habitat sensitivity within Monkman Park. A 1989 grizzly bear habitat reconnaissance in the park indicates that the Paxton Lake/Lupin Lake/Blue Lakes plateau is prime grizzly bear habitat. Although specific areas of the park have been identified as 'prime' grizzly habitat, grizzlies range

throughout the park area. The forest habitat around Kinuseo Falls is better suited to black bears than grizzlies.

A 1985 aerial count of mountain goats in and adjacent to the park identified goat habitat on north, northwest and northeast rock and alpine slopes at elevations between 1700 - 2000 meters. The count revealed a population of 46 goats - 40 adults and yearlings, and 6 kids.

Over the years, wildlife sighted in the park and reported by park staff and visitors includes mule deer, white-tailed deer, moose, elk, mountain sheep, mountain goats, caribou, grizzly and black bears, gray wolves, fishers, martens, wolverines, marmots, hares, red squirrels, and numerous bird species including owls, ptarmigan, grouse, geese and loons. There is no information available with reference to reptiles, amphibians or insects in Monkman Park.

Fish

Kinuseo Falls are a formidable obstacle to migrating fish; the falls effectively separate fish habitat in the park into two distinct sections, above and below the falls. Larger fish are able to follow the Murray River drainage from lower elevations up to the falls. But above the falls, only small char, trout, grayling and whitefish inhabit upper Monkman Creek and the Murray River. Monkman, Lower Blue and Upper Blue Lakes provide the only substantial concentration of nutrients

in this 'closed system' above the falls. The cold, fast flowing, gravel-bottomed creeks do not supply much food for channel inhabitants, and only a few locations, such as the pools along Monkman Creek, support more than a few fish.

BC Environment has stocked the small lakes within the Kinuseo Falls area, and introduced Yellowstone cutthroat trout to Upper Blue and Paxton Lakes in 1983. Monkman Lake was stocked with rainbow trout in 1983 and again in 1989. A 1988 study by BC Environment reported small populations of Dolly Varden char and no traces of rainbow and cutthroat trout in Monkman Lake despite the 1983 stocking effort.

In the winter of 1990, lake chemistry analyses, including standard tests such as water sampling and oxygen and temperature profiles, were carried out at Lower Blue and Paxton Lakes. BC Environment staff identified the need for more background information on the Murray River and Upper and Lower Blue lakes, because fishing pressure on the lakes, as a result of improved access, could seriously affect the fishery in these areas.

Monkman Lake is also home to the uncommon pygmy whitefish, *Prosopium coulteri*; mature adults range between 15-20 cm in length. This lake holds the southern-most population of this species in B.C. No extensive studies have been done to date on this population. The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC)

is assessing whether the pygmy whitefish populations in the Great Lakes in eastern Canada are endangered.

Water Resources

One of the notable attractions of Monkman Provincial Park is the diversity of water features located within its boundaries. The scenic Rocky Mountain landscapes are accentuated by the clear, cold streams, waterfalls, rapids and lakes throughout the area.

Kinuseo Falls Area

Kinuseo Falls is a major water feature of the park. Here the Murray River tumbles 60 meters in a cascading plume to the channel below. On average about 34,000 litres of water per second tumble over the falls. During run-off periods, this flow may exceed 300,000 liters per second. The banks below the falls are prone to erosion, and many areas here stay wet for most of the early summer season.

Several attractive, unnamed lakes are found near Kinuseo Falls, just outside of the park boundary. They are small and clear, low in nutrients and with little water circulation. The Murray River runs deep and swift through this area on its journey northward.

Below Kinuseo Falls, the Murray River broadens and separates into two channels. Two islands in the river are located inside the park boundary. Below the falls the river has

cut a steep canyon, making access to the river from above quite difficult.

Monkman Creek - Monkman Lake Area

At 278 hectares, the shallow Monkman Lake dominates the valley bottom in the centre of the park. Its water level fluctuates with the season. In late summer, gravel and mud flats protrude far out into the center. Upstream from the lake, Monkman Creek meanders widely, creating marshes. Spring run-off is captured and held in these marshes for some time each year before being gradually released into the creek. Monkman Glacier, high on the flanks of Mount Vreeland, is the source of the creek.

Exposed bedrock faults which intersect Monkman Creek at near right angles have created a series of seven waterfalls along the valley. The river forms water pools at the base of each scarp before tumbling over the next waterfall.

Other lakes in this area are typical of a subalpine setting: rocky shorelines and clear, cold water with few inflowing streams. Holmes Lake is an attractive blue-coloured lake which lies along the same line of faults that create the waterfalls of Monkman Creek.

Upper and Lower Blue Lakes Area

The Murray River has as its source four beautiful aquamarine lakes located within a narrow, steep-walled valley. Drainage patterns are well-defined and extend high into the moun-

tains of the Continental Divide. Upper and Lower Blue Lakes maintain high turnover rates and their waters are clear and cold.

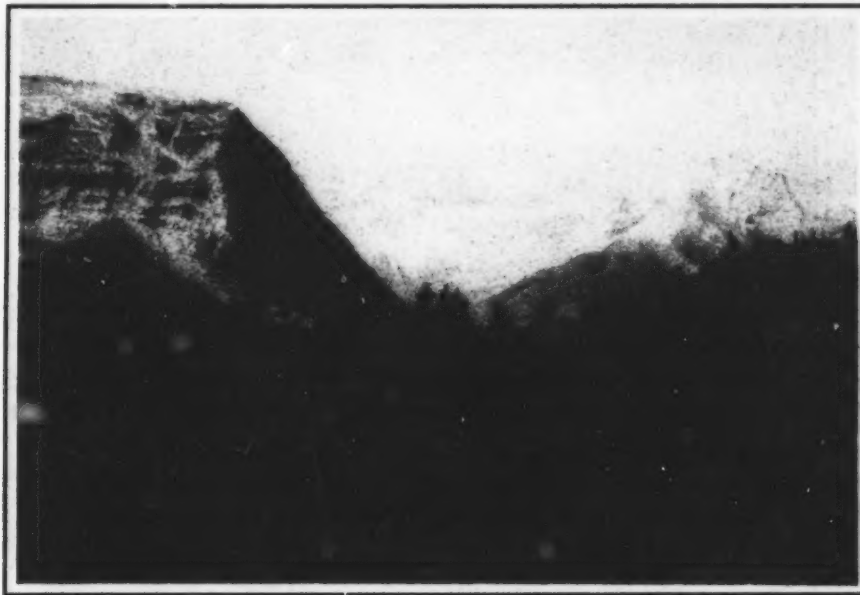
Rock flour, deposited by glaciers, creates the aquamarine colour characteristic of many alpine lakes. Lupin Lake sits in the pass between the watersheds of Monkman Creek and the Murray River. Its outflow falls and cascades over one hundred meters to eventually drain into Lower Blue Lake. Near the falls, a subterranean stream flows out from the exposed bedrock. Several smaller lakes are also found in the area, all with glacial origins and extremely cold temperatures.

Limestone Lakes (interest area for a park addition)

A series of three beautiful, blue-green glacier-fed lakes are located in a steep-walled, rugged valley which lies across the continental divide just south of the park boundary. The splendour and beauty of these alpine lakes has been documented in several articles and reports. The Limestone Lakes are drained by an underground stream into Spakwaniko Creek, which joins Herrick Creek. Herrick Creek flows into the McGregor River, one of the major tributaries of the Fraser River.

Monkman Tarns (interest area for a park addition)

This area, situated on the pacific side of the Divide, consists of rolling sub-alpine plateaus which are dotted with tarns - small, clear, land-locked mountain lakes.



An alpine meadow in Monkman Park



Grizzly bear habitat at Lupin Lake



Limestone Lakes area, to the south of Monkman Park



Monkman Tarns Area

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Archaeology

Little is known about the pre-European human history of the Monkman Provincial Park area. A small number of surveys for archaeological sites have been conducted, in response to proposed developments in the area. These surveys have found some evidence of prehistoric settlement. One survey in the vicinity of Kinuseo Falls revealed a few basalt flakes, suggesting that early tools may have been produced there. Native travellers from the Peace River country may have migrated up the Pine and Murray Rivers to establish summer encampments at good fishing sites. Cabins and trails less than 200 years of age, from the time of European settlement, have been located in the area of the park.

History

The Sekani, Cree and other native peoples travelled the foothills and eastern flanks of the Rockies in their nomadic search for food and shelter, and probably travelled through the Monkman Park area. Their way of living changed when European settlers began to establish themselves on the plains of the Peace River country.

By the early 1920s, vast farmlands had been cultivated to support a growing agricultural economy. In an attempt to secure a more direct and economical route to Pacific ports, a

railway extension from Grande Prairie was required. In 1921, Alex Monkman and a group of fur-trappers found a low pass at the head of what is now known as Monkman Creek. An eighteen-year drama evolved from the discovery – Alex Monkman and a group of volunteers laboured to establish rail and highway transit over Monkman Pass.

The original "highway" route traversed the Rocky Mountains from Beaverlodge, Alberta to Hansard Lake, B.C. (near the settlement of Upper Fraser). But the outbreak of World War II in 1939, and the eventual construction of a railway over Pine Pass northwest of the present park, ended Monkman's dream*. Neither the highway nor the railway were ever realized. Little remains now of the old "highway" route. Sections of it may be observed along the trail from Kinuseo Falls to Monkman Pass. West of Monkman Park, the route descended Fontoniko Creek and the Herrick-McGregor Rivers. This portion of the route no longer exists.

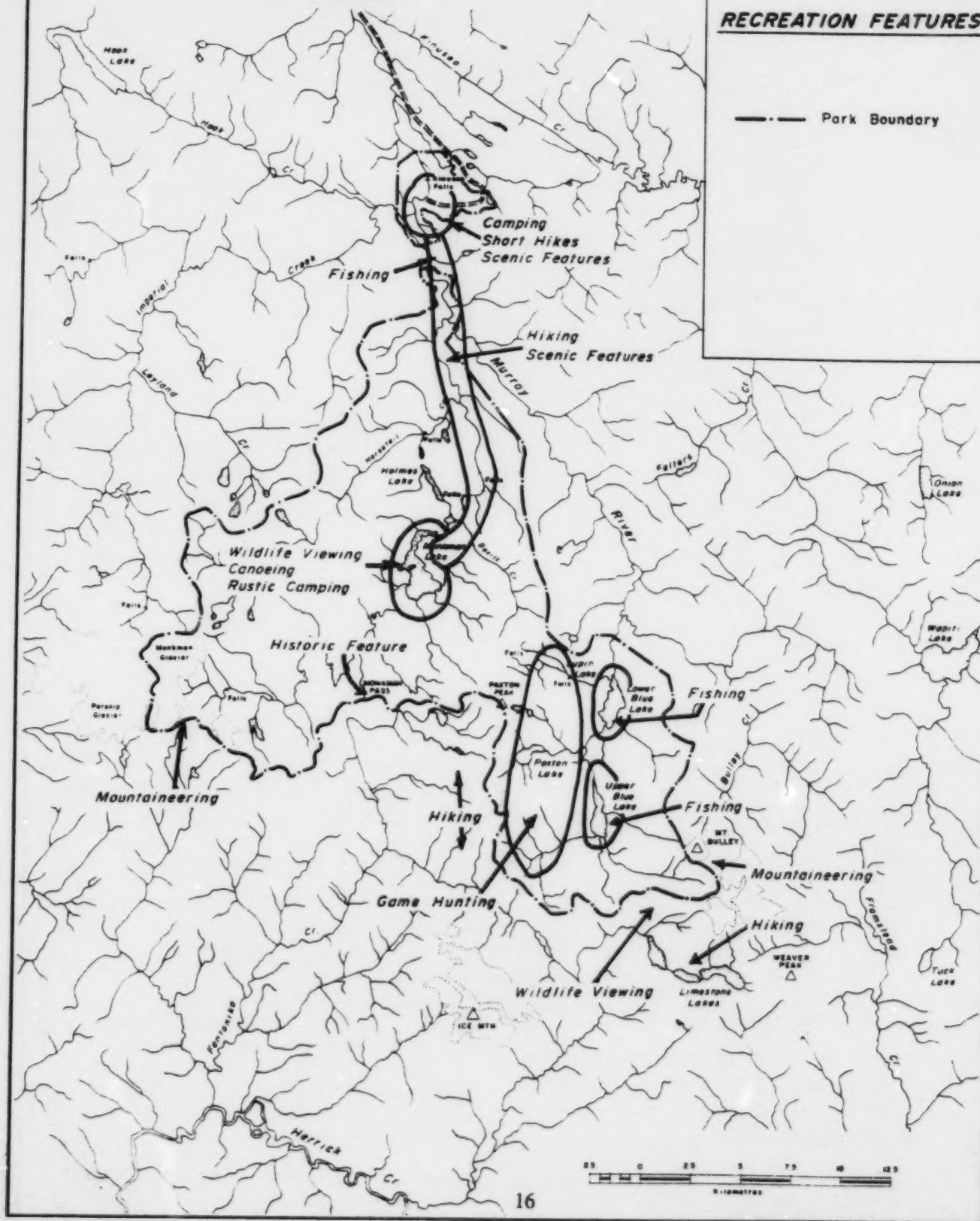
* Several publications detail the events of Alex Monkman's "Monkman Highway Association": see *Monkman Pass Highway* by E.C. Stacey, Beaverlodge and District (Alberta) Historical Society, 1974; and "Monkman Pass" by Richard J. Chamberlin, *The Beaver*, Summer 1981 issue.

MONKMAN PROVINCIAL PARK

FIGURE 6

RECREATION FEATURES

— Park Boundary



VISUAL RESOURCES AND RECREATION FEATURES

Visual Resources

Visitors to Monkman Provincial Park enjoy spectacular alpine scenery, majestic mountain vistas, thundering waterfalls, turquoise lakes, rolling alpine meadows, and pristine forested valleys.

A 1977 Ministry Of Environment study evaluating potential developments for the Northeast Coal region identified the Monkman-Blue Lakes area for its outstanding scenic value: Monkman Lake, with its indented shoreline, islands and steep rocky mountain-side to the west; the spectacular series of waterfalls, rapids and tranquil pools along Monkman Creek; the alpine lakes and lofty waterfall below Lupin Lake in Monkman Valley.*

Park proposal studies in 1976-77 by BC Parks also recognized the Monkman area for its prime scenic value for Monkman Creek valley, the Blue Lakes Valley and Monkman Pass.

The spectacular Kinuseo Falls are a major visual feature of the park, and are accessible by vehicle and by boat. From Kinuseo Falls to Monkman Lake, over Lupin pass and into the Blue Lakes valley, the pristine landscapes of Monkman Park are a unique and significant heritage. The extensive developments to the northeast of the park increase its regional value as an unaltered wilderness.

Recreation Features

The diversity of landscapes and natural features in Monkman Provincial Park present opportunities for rewarding outdoor recreation activities, such as hiking, mountaineering, fishing, skiing and photography. The relatively low mountain pass of Monkman Valley is easily reached, its gentle grades are easy to walk, with numerous attractions along the way – waterfalls, small lakes and scenic vistas.

Figure 6 presents a summary of recreation features in Monkman Park as mapped from the Outdoor Recreation Features Analysis completed in 1982.

From this analysis, features which have been rated as being highly capable of attracting recreational use and/or having Provincial significance include Kinuseo Falls, the Monkman Creek waterfall landscape and the waterfalls which drain Lupin Lake. The flat, dry shorelines which dominate the east side of Monkman Lake offer good locations for camping activity and are rated as regionally significant.

Similar classification is given to the many scenic alpine and subalpine features of the

* R.A.B., "Visual Resource of the Northeast Coal Study Area", Ministry Of Environment, 1977.

Park and adjacent Limestone Lakes area. The Murray River/lower Monkman Creek corridor and Monkman Pass area are scenic, and well suited to hiking, fishing and viewing.

Various locations around Monkman Lake and within the Kinuseo Falls Area have soil conditions which are well suited to campground and trail development.

At lower elevations, the open understorey of the black spruce - lodgepole pine forest provides relatively easy access and opportunity for camping. Devil's club and willow on wetter sites can usually be avoided. Recently burned areas offer panoramic views of the landscape although users of the trail have indicated that they often make for unpleasant hiking due to debris and downed trees.

Once above treeline however, the open alpine meadows become a hiker's paradise and summer displays of wildflowers are most impressive. Enjoyment is especially heightened during periods of sunny weather, unfortunately relatively rare in this section of the Hart Ranges. Cloud cover is common in the park and even mid-summer days can be quite cool.

Wildlife viewing during the summer months can be rewarding. Caribou are known to graze in the alpine meadows of the park; sheep and goat can be seen in the high country while moose frequent the shores of all major

valley bottom lakes. Grizzly and black bear range throughout the park; backcountry visitors must be prepared for possible bear encounters. The presence of such a variety of game provides opportunities for trappers, hunters and photographers.

Having migratory access along the lower Murray, fish reach an impressive size. Above the Falls however, the "closed system" of the upper Murray-Monkman watershed results in smaller fish and limited opportunity. The numerous streams, rivers and lakes within the park provide the visitor with some promising fishing opportunities.

The small lakes within the Kinuseo Falls Area are attractive and have been stocked over the years, but are hard to reach because of the steep and irregular terrain surrounding them.

The landscape through the Monkman Creek area provides good opportunities for horse-back riding.

The park has ideal terrain for backpacking trips with kilometers of trails and open alpine meadows.

All of these activities are conducive to nature appreciation and wildlife/nature photography.

Mountaineering activities can be accommodated in numerous areas throughout the alpine zone where rock exposures provide a variety of challenges.

The main limiting factor for recreational pursuits in the park is the climate – with a short and cool summer season, followed by cold harsh winters. But for those prepared for unpredictable weather, numerous recreational opportunities can be enjoyed in Monkman Park year round.

Visual Resources and Recreation Features Adjacent to Monkman Park

Limestone Lakes are situated within a gently rolling valley surrounded by towering cliffs and sharply peaked mountains. The aquamarine colour of the glacial lakes, and bright greens of the alpine grasses contrast with the dark cliffs. Together the landforms and colours provide for a dramatic viewing experience for hikers.

The Monkman Tarns area is a gently rolling alpine landscapes dotted with small picturesque lakes, providing scenic views of alpine meadows and rock outcrops.

In the distance, Monkman Glacier and the rugged peaks of the Pioneer Range provide spectacular scenic backdrops.

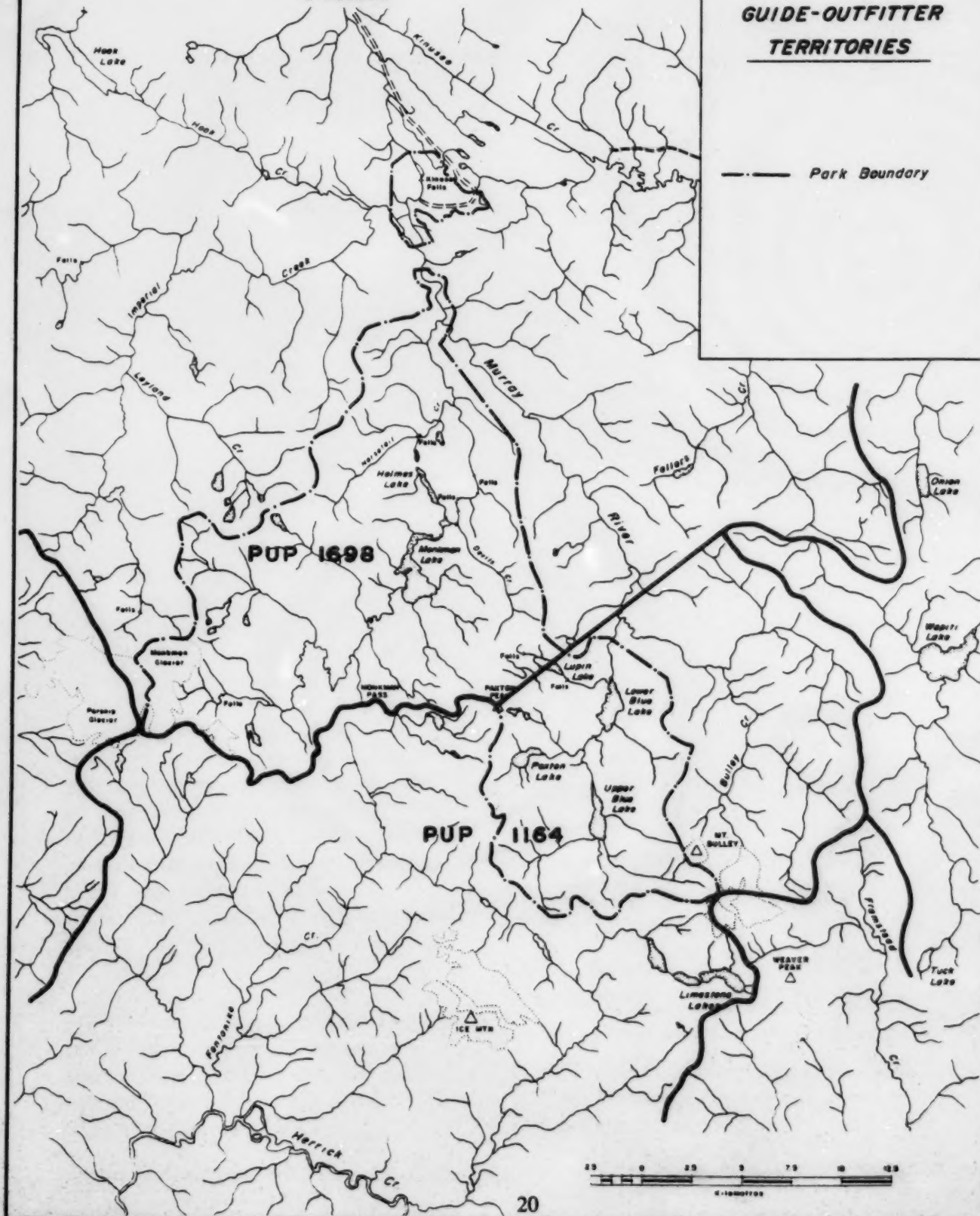
Both areas provide remote backcountry camping and hiking opportunities, photography and nature appreciation within a pristine setting.

MONKMAN PROVINCIAL PARK

FIGURE 7

GUIDE-OUTFITTER TERRITORIES

— Park Boundary



LAND TENURES, OCCUPANCY RIGHTS & JURISDICTIONS

Guide Territories and Traplines

Three registered guide-outfitter territories cover the park area (figure 7). Park Use Permit (PUP) 1164 in the Monkman Pass and Blue Lakes Area of the park is for the purpose of: commercial big game guiding; commercial guiding for fishing, and hiking.; and use and maintenance of fish and game camps.

A second guide-outfitting territory, PUP 1698, covering the Kinuseo Falls and Monkman trail/lake Areas of the park, is issued for the purpose of commercial big game guiding.

PUP 1583 is issued for the purpose of commercial guiding for photographic tours and tourist parties.

There are three registered traplines for the park area (figure 8). A licensed trapline covers the western portion of the park; the second, covering the eastern portion, is now under application for a PUP; and the third, covering a small portion of the park north of Kinuseo Falls, is not active within the park boundary.

Leases, Rights-of-Way and Reserves

Before the park was established, oil and gas exploration were carried out in the Kinuseo Area of Monkman Park. An active Petroleum and Natural Gas Permit (P.N.G. Permit #2722, renewed in 1982) remains, covering a

portion of the Monkman Creek - Monkman Lake Area and most of the Kinuseo Falls Area, and pre-dates the establishment of the park. Since 1980, though, the permit holder has not operated in the park. In the 1970s, seismic lines were cut through the forest near Kinuseo Falls.

There is one present right-of-way within the park: Ministry of Forests #0242592 for the Murray River Road (Project #6146.05).

A Power Reserve (O.I.C. 443/49) remains in the Kinuseo Area; the former Power Commission considered Kinuseo Falls for an electrical generation site.

Resource Use Adjacent to the Park

The region surrounding Monkman Provincial Park supports a variety of resource industries. These include forestry; commercial backcountry recreation; guide-outfitting and trapping; and petroleum, natural gas and mineral resource exploration.

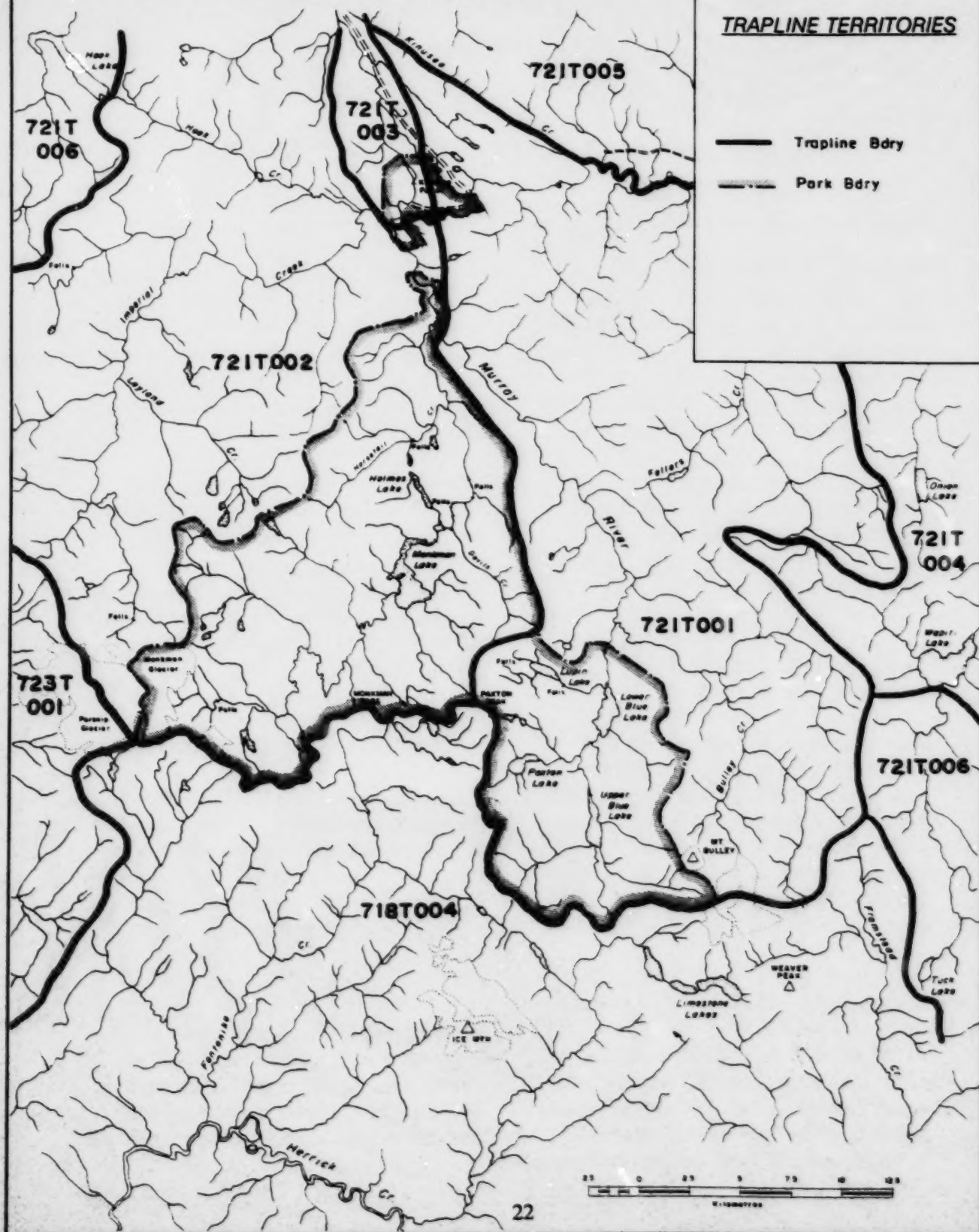
Forestry

Some of the forest lands adjacent to Monkman Provincial Park are presently uncommitted for harvesting. However, this area contributes to the total productive forest land base and the annual allowable cut for the

MONKMAN PROVINCIAL PARK

FIGURE 8

TRAPLINE TERRITORIES



Prince George timber supply area (TSA). A Resource Management Plan for the Prince George TSA is being re-written by the Ministry of Forests (MoF), and timber licensee operating areas will be assessed.

MoF is also preparing a Local Resource Use Plan (LRUP) for the Herrick Creek watershed planning area south of Monkman Park, and including Ovington Creek, Framsted Creek, Spakwaniko Creek, Fontoniko Creek and James Creek – a total area of 193,000 hectares. The LRUP is intended to address forest land use and resource management issues at a finer level of detail than the TSA planning process. Two areas of interest for additions to Monkman Park, the Limestone Lakes and Monkman Tarns Areas, are located in this LRUP.

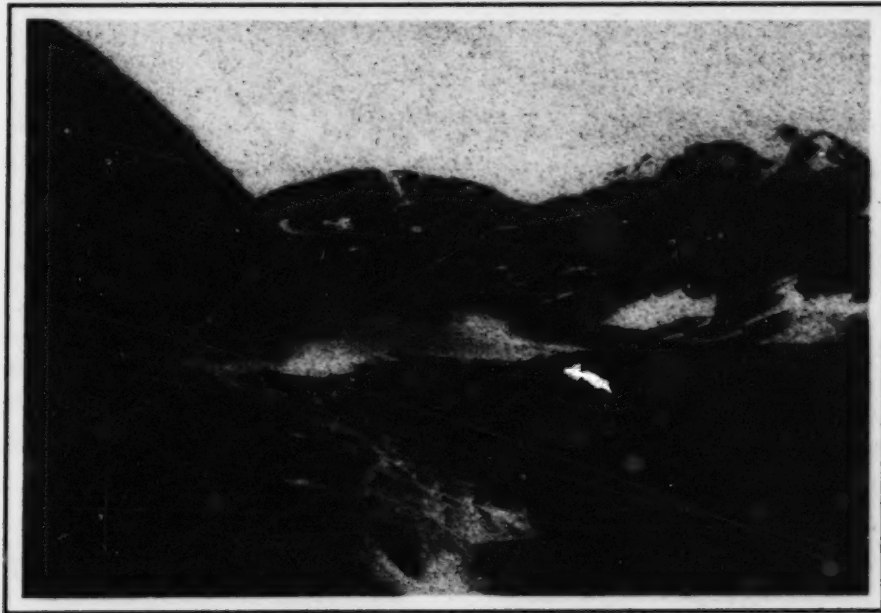
Commercial Backcountry Recreation

BC Lands is developing a Commercial Backcountry Recreation policy for Crown land in British Columbia. While this is being prepared, there is a moratorium on any commercial development in alpine areas, including those near Monkman Provincial Park. The Monkman Park area has been the focus of attention for several individuals interested in establishing backcountry recreation and adventure tourism operations.

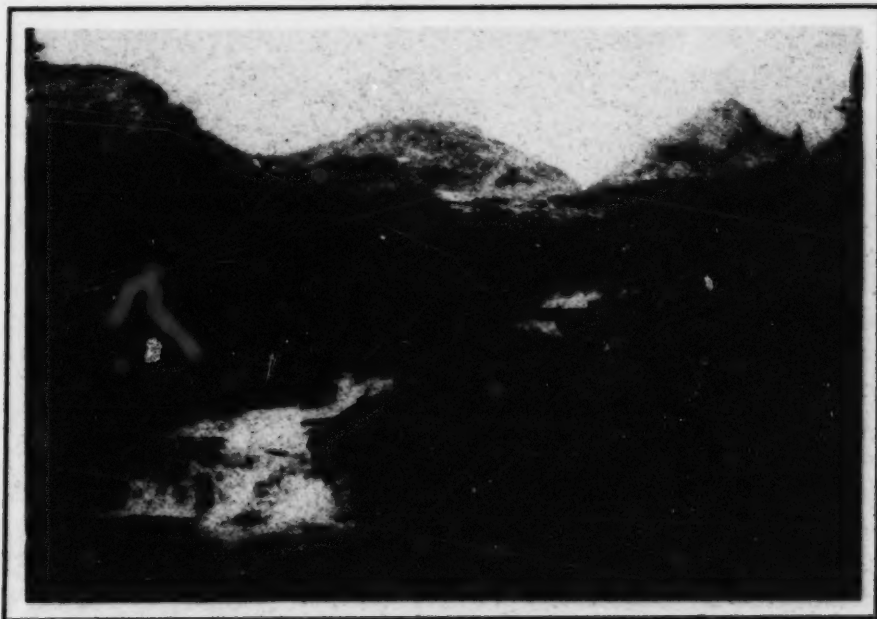
Petroleum, Natural Gas and Mineral Resources

There are no active mineral claims in the area

immediately surrounding Monkman Provincial Park. A phosphate claim east of the park near Wapiti Lake was once staked. There are extensive petroleum, natural gas and coal tenures to the northeast of the park, and exploration is active in this area. Esso Resources conducted an exploration program in the area surrounding the park in 1980, which involved mapping, geochemical sampling and diamond drilling.



Limestone Lakes



Monkman Creek

RECREATION FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Recreation Facilities and Opportunities in Monkman Park

Figure 9 shows the location of all the existing facilities in Monkman Provincial Park – the campground, viewing platform, and picnic shelter.

Kinuseo Falls Area

The Kinuseo Falls Area of the park is accessible both by vehicle and by boat. An improved forestry and park access road has been completed. The Murray West Forest Service Road travels from Tumbler Ridge to Kinuseo Falls campground, following the Murray River valley. It is also possible to jet boat up the Murray river to the base of Kinuseo Falls.

At Kinuseo Falls, a special needs-accessible viewing platform has been constructed and a second viewpoint with a safety fence has been cleared. A trail switchbacks down the valley side to the river below.

One campground is located in the Kinuseo Falls area, and will be completed for the summer of 1992. The Kinuseo Falls camping area will have 42 campsites, including 16 tent sites and 6 pull-through sites, each with picnic tables and fire rings, and pit toilets, water pumps, garbage cans, firewood bins and a picnic shelter will be provided. One of the pit toilets in the day-use area will be wheelchair accessible.

Two day-use areas are in the park, one located on the second island below Kinuseo Falls, and the second adjacent to the campground on the Murray River. The island day-use area has a few tables with fire rings, and a single toilet. Visitors must pack out their own garbage.

Monkman Creek - Monkman Lake Area

The most frequented trail in the park is the Monkman Trail, which follows part of the historic Monkman Pass 'Highway' route. A portion of the trail between the Kinuseo Falls and the rest of Monkman Park lies outside of the park boundary on Crown land. In recent years the trail has been cleared of brush and upgraded from the Kinuseo Falls campground all the way to Monkman Lake. Along this trail, signs point to two small side trails which provide scenic views to some of the waterfalls along Monkman Creek.

There are two designated camping areas within the Monkman Creek - Monkman Lake Area, at the Murray River Crossing and at Monkman Lake, both with rustic facilities. The Murray River Crossing campsite is located about half way along the Monkman Trail. At Monkman Lake, eleven campsites with tent pads have been constructed. A horse corral is also located at the campsite.

Upper Blue - Lower Blue Lakes Area

A second trail within the park is the Lupin Lake Trail, which is overgrown and not well defined. It has not been maintained because of concern about drawing hikers into the prime grizzly bear habitat surrounding Lupin Lake.

The Lower Blue Lake area is used for guided hunting and fishing.

Recreation Facilities and Opportunities in the vicinity of Monkman Park

BC Parks has two Recreation Reserves located on Wapiti Lake adjacent to Monkman Park. Both are established for the use, recreation and enjoyment of the public.

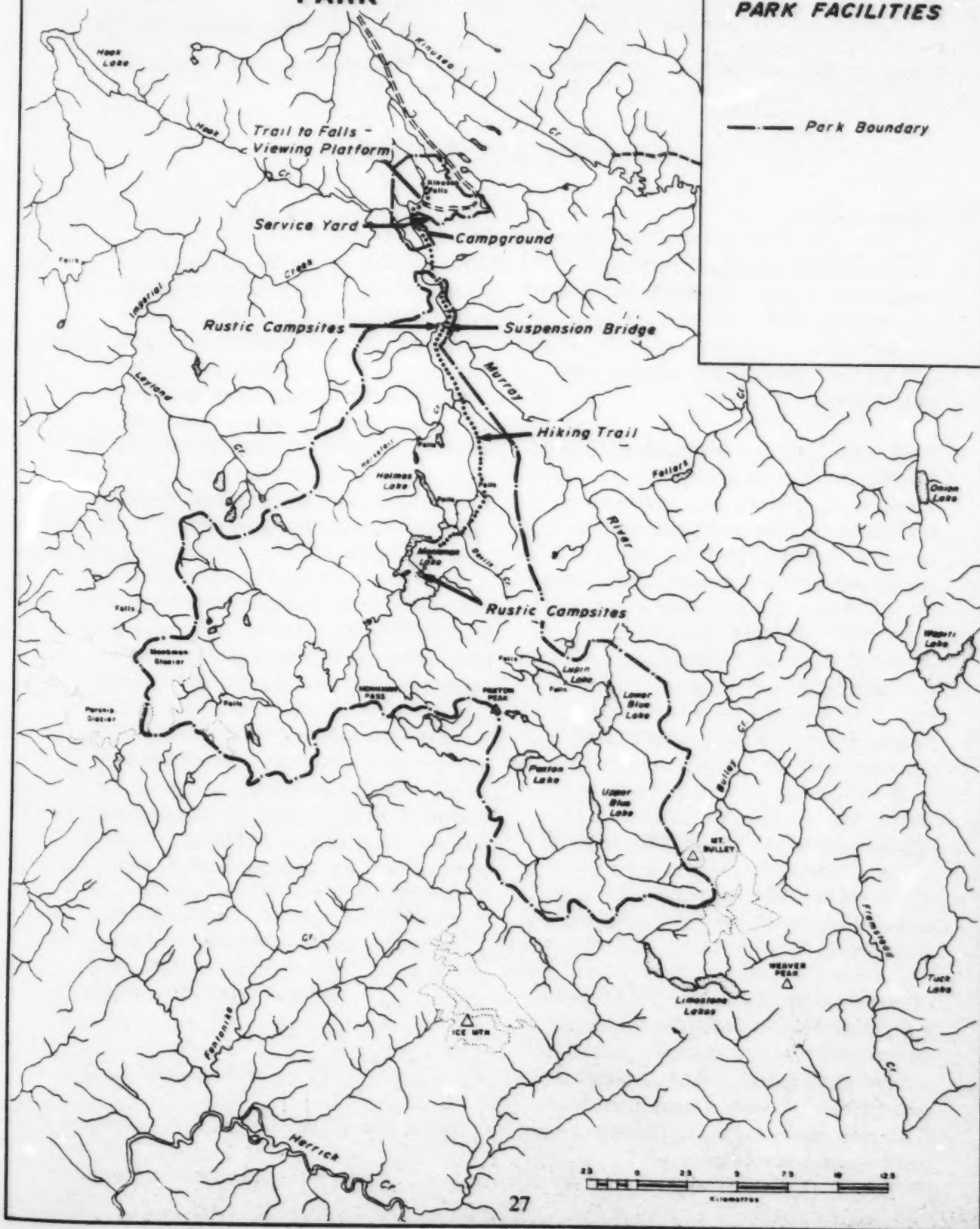
Currently, there are 11 provincial parks providing 318 campsites within the south Peace River region (that portion of the Peace-Liard Regional District south of Wonowon). These parks primarily serve the residents of Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge and the Alberta communities of Beaverlodge and Grande Prairie.

Both the Ministry of Forests and the Peace-Liard Regional District provide outdoor recreation facilities for public use. Forest Service sites at various small lakes and creeks cater to the fishing/hunting recreationist. These are 'primitive campsites' which are best suited to truck campers and vans.

MONKMAN PROVINCIAL PARK

FIGURE 9

PARK FACILITIES



VISITOR USE AND TRENDS

Visitor Market

Monkman Provincial Park has valuable features and resources which meet BC Parks' objectives for recreation, conservation and tourism, and will become a destination park offering backcountry access and traditional park facilities.

Since its establishment in 1981, few people have had the opportunity to visit Monkman Provincial Park, owing to the park's relative remoteness and the previous difficulty of access. Access to the park has been improved with the completion of the new road to the park from Tumbler Ridge.

As facilities and attractions of the south Peace – Alaska Highway tourist region are more fully recognized, it is anticipated that Monkman Park will attract interest and visitors from across the Province and much of northern Alberta – particularly from Beaverlodge and Grande Prairie, where opportunities for mountain recreation are limited. Tourists travelling to or from Alaska will also be enticed to the park as the new travel corridors will offer an alternate touring route.

Complementing other park developments in the coal block vicinity (Gwillim Lake and Sukunka Falls), Monkman Provincial Park will provide first-class vehicle camping opportunities, becoming a focus in the South Peace park system and adding diversity to the area's resource-based economy.

Expected Trends in Park Use

Tumbler Ridge, located 42 km north of Monkman Park, is home to approximately 10,000 people. A parks, outdoor recreation and tourism strategy plan commissioned by the District of Tumbler Ridge outlines some of the preferred recreational activities in this community: Camping, hiking, fishing and water sports are highly popular and may see rapid growth. Traditional activities like hunting, snowmobiling and trail riding will continue to be popular, but probably will not grow so rapidly.

Historically, parks developed in the South Peace region, with the exception of those near towns and cities, have been oriented to the travelling public. Additional facilities including campgrounds and day-use areas for local residents are in demand. The improvement of access to wilderness areas is viewed as a high priority tourism objective for the region. The increase in the region's population will likely increase demands for recreational opportunities in the Monkman Park vicinity.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The following management considerations will be addressed in the Monkman Provincial Park Master Plan. Resolution of these considerations will ensure that the dual conservation and recreation objectives for park management are met. The master plan will consider, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

Recreation Use and Facility Development

Improved vehicle access and the campground development in Monkman Park will draw increased numbers of people to the park. The master plan will need to provide direction on the type and level of trail development that is appropriate, and on the types of additional activities that may be provided for campers and day-use visitors. Backcountry hikers share many of the same areas as grizzlies, which may lead to conflicts. The plan must address the level and type of backcountry use that is compatible with wildlife and ecosystem resources.

area will be completed in the fall, 1991. This will greatly increase the accessibility of parts of the park for people travelling in vehicles. Other planned forestry roads in the area will also allow vehicles to drive close to many areas of the park that are difficult to access now. These changes will affect the numbers and types of visitors to Monkman, as well as how the park is used. Increased pressures on fish and wildlife resources are anticipated. BC Parks needs to develop management strategies to cope with these expected changes.

Boundary Changes

BC Parks has interests in adding some areas to Monkman Park. Some areas of interest that need to be assessed include Limestone Lakes, and the area to the south of the Mt. Paxton - Monkman Pass area.

Mechanized Vehicle Access

The plan will need to provide direction and guidelines for managing mechanized vehicle use in the park. This includes all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, floatplanes and helicopters. The management of these activities in the park needs to be considered with respect to possible impacts on the resources and other uses of the park.

Road Development

A forestry road through the Monkman Park

Wildlife

The areas surrounding Upper Blue Lake, Lower Blue Lake and Lupin Lake are prime grizzly bear habitat. The master plan will consider how recreation should be managed in these areas of potential conflict with wildlife.

to Tumbler Ridge, Dawson Creek and Chetwynd, and their promotion of local and regional tourism; (2) matching promotion strategies with the role of the park and the level of development; and (3) how best to promote Monkman Park as a destination spot.

Park Facility Development

With improved vehicle access and increased promotion of the park, there will be pressure for facility development. As well, there will be a need to provide more variety of day hikes, and improving the condition of the Monkman Lake hiking trail. The master plan will guide what level and type of development is appropriate for Monkman Park.

Natural Resources Inventory

There are gaps in vegetation and wildlife inventory information for the park. In order to make better resource management decisions, the master plan will identify information needs.

Commercial Recreation Development

The plan will need to provide direction on appropriate levels and types of commercial recreation development, such as heli-hiking and horse packing.

Park Promotion

The manner in which Monkman Park is promoted to the public will be dealt with in the master plan. Strategies regarding promotion will involve: (1) how BC Parks relates